



DWRLF – Enhancement to State Programs (Set-Aside) Public Water Supply Supervision (PWSS) – Fact Sheet

The result of reducing staff or funding of this activity would be reducing the assistance to the DHH-OPH CEHS Safe Drinking Water Program (SDWP), the Louisiana Department of Natural Resources and the Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality. This could result in less funding for initiatives (both within DHH and other State Agencies) for the protection of drinking water which could lead to more water contamination. Water contamination could lead to illness and disease in humans consuming it as well as increased costs to the government providing emergency water delivery and medical services. If funding was increased, the DWRLF could provide more assistance to water initiatives.

Objective

Optimize the dollars available from the US EPA State Revolving Fund Capitalization Grant for assistance to water initiatives in Louisiana. This can be accomplished by providing assistance directly through the loan program or set-aside programs. Any dollars used for the set-aside programs are not available for loans for infrastructure, consequently, coordination between programs is necessary to maximize the dollars and accomplish the goals of public health protection, source water protection, and financial assistance.

Narrative

The Safe Drinking Water Act provides each state with flexibility to determine how much of their capitalization grant should be used for infrastructure loans and set-aside activities. However, with this flexibility comes responsibility to determine how to best direct funds to address the problems in our state. We believe it is critical to evaluate and understand the impact of our decisions in order to ensure that assistance will be available in the future. There is a direct relationship between set-aside funding and the long-term loan capacity of the DWRLF. This impact is significant and might suggest that we should limit our set-aside use. Many of the activities conducted under the set-asides can have a direct impact on preventing future problems in the public water systems.

DWRLF has partnered with other programs within DHH as well as other State Agencies to fund initiatives that either protect source waters or humans drinking the water. The initiatives of the SDWP contribute exponentially to increasing compliance among public water systems, which

can also reduce the need for costly infrastructure improvements. The initiatives of the Department of Environmental Quality and the Department of Natural Resources contribute to protection of Louisiana ground waters and surface waters which are our sources of drinking water. We evaluate our use of set-asides for these initiatives on an annual basis as we develop the Intended Use Plan to determine whether set-asides levels should be reduced or increased.

Better Health

Drinking water is necessary to sustain human life. There are no demographic boundaries—every human needs safe drinking water for survival.

The direct customers of the PWSS set-aside are the other programs across state government that further public health protection initiatives of Louisiana drinking water. Our financial assistance to these programs enhances their ability to accomplish their goals.

Transparent, Accountable and Effective Government

- By providing funding to other programs in state government with the same goals as the DWRLF, we are leveraging funding sources outside of general fund monies. This allows them to fund new projects or better fund existing ones without tapping into the state general fund, ultimately resulting in savings for the taxpayers of Louisiana
- Working with other programs is a Best Management Practice -- method or technique found to be the most effective and practical means of achieving an objective, while making the optimum use of available resources.

CFDA Number 66.468 Drinking Water State Revolving Fund
40 CFR 35.3500 - 3585
Louisiana RS 40:2821-2826, LRS 36:254.1

1. Current Economic condition—dwindling resources means need for collaboration and partnering of programs and optimizing dollars available to reduce the burden to taxpayers.